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## ESPERANZA:

### AN INCIDENT OF LIFE AT SPA.

Do you know the music-room in the Redoubte at Spa? The large expanse in the centre of it is kept clear for dancing, and spectators whose minds and toes are not light or fantastic, remain in the cloisters which surround it, and which are well supplied with comfortable chairs and sofas. Sometimes it happens that the young men are indolent or timid, and the young ladies stiff, and then the smooth shining floor is a desert, and in spite of the floods of light and music, there is something depressing about the general aspect. But that was not the state of affairs one August night, although the majority of visitors present *were* English. There had been a great deal of fraternisation at the *tables-d'hôte* of the different hotels; walking, riding, driving parties had been made up daily; the foreign element was just sufficient to correct the British stiffness, without being numerically strong enough to provoke its exclusiveness. Altogether, a very pleasant little society was formed in the place that season. Millicent Lund was an attractive member of it; a handsome, high-couraged girl; an orphan, sole surviving child of a drysalter, consequently an heiress. While at school, from the age of twelve to nineteen that is, she was happy, but her guardian's wife had patronising manners, which Milly quietly put up with till she was twenty-one, and then took charge of herself—that is, she engaged one of her old governesses, who was getting too blind and deaf to teach, and would consequently have been otherwise destitute, to accept the nominal position of taking charge of her; but of course it was a sinecure. People were shocked; but much Milly cared for that! She sat on a sofa behind one of the pillars, talking to a black-haired man of about thirty, who was dressed rather too well for the expression of his features, which was intelligent.

'I am afraid of you, Mr Bertram,' she was saying.

'Are you?' he replied. 'How people are maligned; I heard that you were afraid of no one.'

'Perhaps you have been slandered also.'

'Shall I tell you a romantic story?'

'O yes; please.'

'Do not let your expectations rise,' said Bertram; 'there is nothing sensational about it. Upwards of a year ago, I happened to be staying at Brussels during the Carnival. The Countess G. had a fancy to give a masked ball, and I received an invitation. It was a very brilliant affair, and at the same time the company was select, for the hostess received all her guests on arrival singly, and unmasked, in a small ante-room, so that none but those who were properly invited could gain admittance. I had not been in the room five minutes before I saw a blue domino, who produced the most extraordinary effect upon me that I have ever experienced. Up to that time I had laughed at mesmerism, presentiments, everything which is connected with a mysterious intercommunication of spirits. But now the fact of the existence of secret sympathies was forced upon me. I knew at once that this was the only woman I could ever love. Of course I had often thought myself in love before, but now I saw that I had given that name to a passing fancy, which never reached my heart. I spoke to her, I danced with her. How the night passed, I have no idea; it seemed gone before it had well begun.'

'You saw her face before she left?'

'Not for a moment. Nor was I able to discover who she was, or where she came from, afterwards. That she was English, I am confident, though she spoke Italian all the evening.'

'I am quite interested,' said Miss Lund. 'What was her height, and her figure?'

'Like yours.'

'Indeed! And the colour of her hair?'

'Yours exactly.'

'And you have never met her again?'

'Not till this evening.'

'Really, Mr Bertram,' said Milly, laughing, 'you almost look as if you were going to claim me as your mysterious domino.'

'No; I remember my promise.'

'And that was?'

'Not to claim her until she wrote or uttered the word *Esperanza*.'

'Really, you have kept your word, and told a veritable romance; the lady has only to turn out a ghost, or a ghoul to make it complete,' said Miss Lund; but as she spoke, she started and turned pale; it was only with an effort that she completed her sentence.

Bertram, looking round for the cause of this emotion, saw that a new arrival at Spa, a man whom he knew slightly in England, had just entered the room, and he experienced that pleasing thrill which animates a pointer on snuffing a gamey scent, or a dramatic author when the idea of a plot comes into his head, for he relieved the tedium of a somewhat lethargic existence by watching the little social romances going on around him. If he had been a tattler, this might have proved a mischievous propensity; but he kept his discoveries to himself, or only intimated them to the principal actors, for his amusement consisted in knowing what other people failed to perceive. The young man who had just entered moved up the room, looking right and left for acquaintances. Presently, he saw Bertram, who came forward and shook hands with him, asked him when he had arrived, what hotel he was staying at, and other little commonplaces, while he was answering which he saw Miss Lund, and could not prevent a slight start before he bowed coldly. The young lady replied with a distant bend of the neck.

'You know Miss Lund?' said Bertram.

'I have met her once or twice. But they are going to dance again, and as I am not in a mood for violent exercise, having only just swallowed my dinner, I shall go and have a look at the *Trente et Quarante*.'

Though not a gossip himself, Bertram by no means objected to take occasional advantage of the gleanings gathered by members of that fraternity, so he went and sat down by Mrs Cracket.

'So you have been making love to the heiress,' said she.

'Rash, under your very eyes, wasn't it?' he replied. 'But what is there between her and Graham?'

'Do you mean to tell me that you don't know?'

'How should I? I was not aware of Miss Lund's existence till this evening.'

'Well, they were engaged for ever so long; he was at her house every day; most improper, with only that poor old Miss Corney to act as chaperone; when suddenly she broke off the match. The airs these parvenus give themselves!'

'Was there no cause, then?'

'Oh, I suppose it was some jealous whim, and there may have been occasion for it. You men are all alike.'

This was quite enough for Bertram to start upon, and he made no more inquiries. But he enlisted himself in the troop of the heiress's admirers, which was pretty numerous, 'took the Lund shilling,' as he himself expressed it, and being an adept in the art of making himself agreeable, was soon promoted to the rank of leading partner and first shawl-carrier, *vice* Williams and Venables, told off respectively to Miss Corney and the lapdog. This distinction did not puff him up unduly, for the discriminating young man perceived that the preference was afforded him because he seldom approached the topics of love or matrimony, and

when he did, it was always in a tone of badinage.

Yet there were times when she assumed a coquettish air, which seemed to invite him to more serious flirtation, but this was invariably when Graham was present, and appeared to be observing her.

'Now,' said Bertram to himself, 'there are two courses for the male spoon to pursue: either, to clear out of the place altogether, or to follow the female spoon's lead.' Graham adopted the latter course, and harnessed himself to the car of a handsome young widow, who dressed gorgeously, rode fearlessly, talked slangily, danced untiringly, and sat down to play.

The manners of the little English community assembled at Spa were very much relaxed from the standard set up by each individual member at home. Persons, even of different sexes, spoke to one another without a formal introduction; young ladies danced sometimes twice consecutively with the same partner. The majority only went once to church on Sunday, and devoted the rest of the day to long walks in the woods, the perusal of secular journals, and listening to the band, which played other music than Handel's. Many who frowned at sixpenny whist at home as gambling, staked their florins and five-franc pieces at roulette and rouge-et-noir. But there was one tacit law which the female portion of the British visitors adhered to religiously, and that forbade them to take seats at either of the play-tables. They might stand behind, and make their little stakes over people's shoulders, with an air of assumed indifference as to whether they lost or won, if they pleased. That was considered to be mere looking-on. But to sit down like a regular Gambler, with a big G, was held to be a fearful breach of propriety.

And this crime Mrs Geylass, the young widow, committed. She constantly took a seat, which was obsequiously vacated for her, at the unsocial board, removed her gloves, took a card and pin, piled her stock of napoleons into little heaps in front of her, and went in for the thing in the most business-like way, her admirers clustering round, and backing her luck; on the principle, I suppose, that imitation is the sincerest flattery. The admirers alluded to were all men; their mothers, wives, and sisters abhorred her to a woman. They would have cut her, only her late husband's cousin was a lord, and her own father a baronet, and she was rich. Blood and money cover more sins than charity, so they bowed and smiled, and answered when she spoke to them. But that was not very often, for the widow preferred masculine conversation.

This was the lady to whom Graham now devoted himself; he procured nogsays for her; he contended for the honour of her hand in the ball-room, and her foot when she mounted on horseback, and his attentions were always most earnest when Milly Lund was present. Bertram smiled approval. 'Graham is no fool,' thought he; 'he has selected the next most attractive girl; just as the Lund has selected the next (in her blinded judgment) most attractive man.' This soliloquiser had no false modesty, you see.

Having thus ascertained that these two young people were desperately in love with one another, Bertram no longer gave himself the trouble of paying so assiduous a court to Miss Lund, and

cultivated the acquaintance of Graham, who was too much a man of the world to shew a reserve which might betray jealousy, if he felt any, which is doubtful. The two men had not chanced to meet often, but they had been thrown together some two years before in the settlement of a domestic matter in which Graham had behaved in a manner calculated to excite Bertram's esteem, and he was inclined to like the man who knew better of him than most other people did. For our loves and friendships depend quite as much upon men and women's opinion of ourselves as upon their own intrinsic merits.

They breakfasted at the same little table; they strolled afterwards in the hotel garden, smoking; they also consumed their last cigars at night in company, and waxed confidential. At least, the one who had something to confide in did it, and Bertram learned that Graham was on the point of going out to Africa, to shoot big game.

The other visitors at Spa made a totally different arrangement for the young man, and decreed that he was about to marry the lively widow forthwith. Mrs Cracket announced the forthcoming event to Millicent Lund as an ascertained fact, and the young lady, believing it, went mad. I do not mean that she required a strait-waistcoat, or put wild-flowers in her hair, or sang scraps of song, or danced with her shadow. She did not even shew any emotion before Mrs Cracket and the gossips, but smiled, and remarked that she supposed it was a good match; for she was not of an hysterical nature. But her mind was for the time unhinged, for all that; and she was quite capable of doing some desperate thing which society would have brought in Temporary Insanity. It was quite true that she had broken with Graham, but then he had no business to marry any one else; &c. How could she appease her resentment; how prove that she did not care one iota for the man she had once been betrothed to? If she could only take the initiative; that would be better still. No one can throw off the restraints conventionally imposed by their fellow-creatures with impunity; if Milly Lund had not indulged her tastes for independence and originality to such an extent; if she had had any experienced friend of her own sex in whom she had confidence, to advise her, she would never have been guilty of writing, on a sheet of lemon-coloured note-paper: *Let me see you to-morrow morning.*—*M. L.* and dropping it, with her handkerchief, at the Redoubte, when only Bertram was near enough to pick it up. The wisp of paper was not addressed to anybody in particular; that was the only shred of prudence she shewed; but then she gave it almost with her own hand, which was very shocking.

'If Graham had known that I had this in my pocket, he would hardly have bidden me such a friendly good-night!' said Bertram, on examining the note before going to bed. And then he put it carefully away in his pocket-book. When he called at Millicent's lodgings, he found her alone, not even Miss Corney being present. She had a wild, excited look in her eyes, and a deep flush on her cheek; and directly the door was closed, she stepped hurriedly towards him.

'Do you know why I have invited you here?' she asked.

Bertram looked as many volumes as he could, and bowed discreetly.

'*Esperanza!*' said she, turning away.

'What!' cried Bertram. 'My sympathies were true; you are really'—

'The blue domino!'

Instead of throwing himself at her feet, seizing her hand, and calling her by her Christian name, as he ought to have done, Bertram said, in a musing tone: 'Curious! I was never at a ball in Brussels in my life.'

'Oh!' cried Millicent, shrinking away, covering her face with her hands, and shedding tears of bitter shame and humiliation.

'I hope you will forgive me,' Bertram continued.

'I had no idea you would believe my rodomontade, which was only made up at the moment for fun. Pray, do not be distressed; I know all about it. It is pique which has impelled you to listen to the suit of so unworthy an individual; if it were otherwise, I should indeed esteem myself the most fortunate of men. As it is, it is happy that I am neither a needy adventurer, nor an unscrupulous lover, or perhaps you might have been hurried into a marriage which would have proved the misery of your life; and Graham would be eaten by lions, hugged to death by gorillas, stamped out by elephants, poisoned by snakes and quinine, and—and all sorts of things. By-the-bye, do you know that he is off to the Cape next month?'

Millicent was too much overwhelmed by appreciation of the position she had placed herself in, to reply; so Bertram went on:

'They have made up a story about his engagement to Mrs Geylass. Absurd! If he cannot marry one lady, I am certain he will never take to another, unless perhaps an Ashantee. Not even for pique. I do wish, dear Miss Lund, that you would make a friend of me, and tell me the real cause of offence in Graham. Do not think me curious and impertinent; I only ask because I have a suspicion that I might be able to remove some false impressions. I was left trustee to a young lady, a cousin of my own, to whom Graham was once engaged; and I know that when the affair was broken off, he was very much blamed. Can that sad business have caused you to think badly of him?'

'Had I—not—a right—to do so?' sobbed Millicent.

'Far be it from me to place a limit to the Rights of Women!' said Bertram. 'I only know that Graham was not one iota to blame in that sad affair, the fault being entirely on the lady's side; that he could have cleared himself in your estimation at her expense, if he had not pledged himself to silence; and that he kept that pledge, when the happiness of his life was at stake, is very much to his credit. It is no romance that I am telling you this time, Miss Lund; I give you my word of honour that what I say is true. I was one of those to whom Graham made the promise of secrecy.'

When you have nothing more to say to a woman who is crying, it is best to go away. So Bertram went.

When he parted from Graham that night, he said: 'By-the-bye, I have something to give you, old fellow.' And opening his pocket-book, he produced the little undirected note, and handed it over.

On the following morning, Millicent had another caller; an unexpected one this time.

'I have got your note,' said Graham, seeing that she looked startled. 'What may I hope?'

'My note!'

Graham held it in his hand open. She took it, and read :

*Let me see you to-morrow morning.*—*M. L.* 'I have been informed that I—was hasty—once,' she said, blushing over neck and forehead ; 'and, if so, I am sorry for any unjust expressions I may have used.'

She could not think what else to say. It did well enough.

'But,' said Millicent, after an hour's conversation, 'you were very proud yourself, you know, Harry, not to make any appeal to the trustee people to explain.' And though he did not think so, he owned it ; just as he would have owned anything just then.

He did not go to Africa to shoot gorillas ; he stopped at home, and married the heiress. He is very fond of Bertram ; but I do not think his wife likes his friend so well as she professes. That little scene was too humiliating.

### GREAT MEDICINE MEN.

It was a remark of one who was himself famous as a conversationalist, that if he had to choose a conversable companion out of a strange company, he would select a doctor. However dull such may naturally be, his profession must at least have made him acquainted with curious phases of human life ; or, at all events, with the diseases to which flesh is heir ; and which, since they may one day happen to ourselves, have a certain interest for us. Similarly, a chatty book on *Doctors and Patients*\* must needs have an interest for the general reader which cannot be claimed by a similar work on lawyers or parsons ; and if the materials are well arranged, it can scarcely fail to please. Mr John Timbs is far too well practised an author to make any error in this regard, and the result of his labours is two very pleasant and informing volumes. It has been bitterly observed of the medical faculty that 'the sun sees their practice, and the earth hides their faults.' But if this would imply their incapacity to assist, and even to save their patients, it is certainly, as a rule, a libel. To shew how science progresses, we have only to compare the proportion of those who used to die in hospital with those who do so now, from, of course, the same class of diseases. In 1688, the proportion of deaths to cures in St Thomas's Hospital was one in seven ; in 1741, it had diminished to one in ten ; in 1780, to one in fourteen ; in 1815, to one in sixteen ; while, during 1827, out of 12,494 patients, 259 only perished, or one in forty-eight ! Again, the entire half of our population was at one time destroyed by one disease alone—small-pox—while now, thanks to vaccination, this scourge has lost its terrors. Of all cases in Homerton Fever Hospital, 'not one death occurred to a properly protected person ; the proportions having been to persons over fifteen years of age, the unvaccinated, forty-seven per cent. ; the badly vaccinated, twenty-six per cent. ; the tolerably vaccinated, eight per cent. ; the fairly vaccinated, four per cent. ; and the well vaccinated, none at all.' None of the nurses or porters (all of whom, of course, had been well protected by vaccination) took this disease : a fact in itself which would convince all persons capable

of reasoning upon this subject. That mankind grows wiser with growing time, there is, we hope, no doubt ; but yet the proportion of ignorant and foolish persons will always probably be very large. The opposition to vaccination is now almost wholly confined to the lower orders, whereas in Jenner's own time he had to contend not only against the virulence of his own profession, but even against the denunciation of the pulpit. Indeed, it was thanks to laymen, and not to doctors, that that theory lived and thrived which was destined to do the greatest good to the human race of any scientific discovery, save, perhaps, that of chloroform. It owed some of its success with the fair sex to the sagacious statement of Dr Meade, that 'to this salutary preventive the Circassian ladies chiefly owed their beauty.' Most fortunately, the disease against which it was directed did not visit the poor alone—no less than eleven of the offspring of the imperial House of Austria perished of it within fifty years—so that the question was neither neglected nor postponed, but constantly discussed. But putting small-pox out of the question, many other diseases have certainly been mitigated, if not eradicated, by the advances of medical science. Typhus fever once visited us every year, and carried off to the grave one of every three whom it attacked ; whereas it is now seldom known as an epidemic, and when it does come, slays but one in eighteen. Consumption is the most formidable foe with which British skill has to contend ; yet in the gross the mortality even from that cause has diminished by five per cent.

The principles which guided the early physicians were indeed, as might be expected, crude and vague enough. Galen's theory was simply this : 'Given a disease, determine its character as hot or cold, moist or dry, by an effort of imagination ; having done so, select a remedy which has been catalogued as possessing opposite qualities.' For dysentery, among other absurd prescriptions, he gives 'the ashes of snails.' If the practice of medicine was empirical—mere experimentalising—that of surgery was in a still worse condition. When Felix operated on Louis XIV. for the stone, he was so doubtful of his own skill, as well as the results of it, that, though the operation was successfully performed, his agitation was so excessive that a nervous tremor settled on him for life, and in bleeding a friend the next day, he disabled the patient irreparably. 'When Felip de Utre went in search of the Omegas from Venezuela, he was wounded by a spear just beneath the right arm. A Spaniard, who was ignorant of surgery, undertook to cure him, and De Utre's coat of mail was placed upon an old Indian, who was mounted on a horse ; the amateur surgeon then drove a spear into the Indian's body through the hole in the armour, and his body having been opened, the spear being still kept in the wound, it was discovered that the heart was uninjured ; thus they assumed that De Utre's wound was not mortal, and, being treated as if the wound were an ordinary one, he recovered. When Henry II. of France was mortally wounded by a splinter from a spear in tilting with Montgomerie, which entered his visor and pierced his eye, the surgeons, for the purpose of discovering the probable injury done to the king, cut off the heads of four criminals, and thrust splinters into their eyes as nearly at the same

\* *Doctors and Patients.* By John Timbs. R. Bentley and Son.

inclination as the fatal one had entered that of the king.' Barbers were surgeons for centuries, and surgery was barbarous. Henry V. at Agincourt, with 30,000 men, had but one surgeon and fifteen assistants, who were pressed for the purpose; and even these had also to do a little fighting, three of them at Agincourt being archers. The chief surgeon was paid L.10 quarterly, and a shilling a day for his rations, but was allowed to receive both prisoners and plunder; only, when the latter amounted to more than L.20 in value, a third of it went to the king.

During the reign of Henry VIII. there were but twelve surgeons in London. In 1512, physicians and surgeons had to be approved of by the Bishop of London and the Dean of St Paul's. On the other hand, matters were advanced in one respect much further than at present—females were everywhere to be met with practising the healing art.

What happened to patients who had to submit to operations in those early days, can scarcely be conceived by a generation accustomed to chloroform and laughing-gas. Fabricius of Acquapendente, preceptor of Harvey, thus describes what he considers an improved and easy operation: 'If it be a movable tumour, I cut it away with a red-hot knife, that sears as it cuts; but if it be adherent to the chest, I cut it without bleeding or pain with a wooden or horn knife soaked in aqua-fortis, with which having cut the skin, I dig out the rest with my fingers.'

After the knife that 'sears as well as cuts,' all 'sympathies' and 'antipathies' may well seem to be fanciful and unreal, yet it seems certain that in some cases the dislikes to particular objects, and even sounds, which we are wont to ascribe to affectation, is very genuine and deep-seated. A certain clergyman, we are soberly informed, always fainted when he heard a particular verse in Jeremiah read; and another case was even still more unfortunate, being that of an officer who could not stand the beating of a drum, and eventually died of it. One man would fall down at the smell of mutton as though deprived of life; another could not eat a single strawberry; and another's head became frightfully swollen if he touched the smallest particle of hare. Orfila speaks of a painter, named Vincent, who was seized with vertigo whenever there were roses in the room. Hippocrates instances one Nicanor who swooned whenever he heard the flute. Boyle himself, in spite of his philosophy, fell into a syncope whenever he heard the splashing of water. The Duke d'Epervan swooned at seeing a leveret, though a hare took no effect upon him—which is as much as to say that he was frightened at a pony, but not at a horse. Tycho Brahe fainted at the sight of a fox, Henry III. at a cat, and Marshal d'Albret at a pig.

In most of these cases it is the heart which, through the imagination or otherwise, is strongly affected. That organ would seem to contain the very principle of life itself, since it so long survives the rest. Harless observed it beating in the body of a decapitated murderer one hour after death; Margo found the right auricle beating two hours and a half after the execution of another; and Em Rousseau mentions that a woman's heart had rhythmic contractions seven-and-twenty hours after she had been guillotined. Vesalius, who was the

first to dissect the human body, had to appear before the Inquisition upon the groundless charge of dissecting a live man in consequence of a manifestation of this kind, and never outlived the scandal. There is no 'Holy Office' in these days to interfere with the liberty of the 'subject,' but even now a medical man may find himself placed in a very embarrassing position. Sir Henry Holland states, that when in the East, 'conversations on poisons with Ali Pasha, designedly but warily brought on, ended by his asking me whether I knew of any poison which, put on the mouthpiece of a pipe, or given in coffee, might slowly or silently kill, leaving no trace behind. The instant and short answer I gave, that "as a physician I studied how to save life, not to destroy it," was, probably as I judged from his face, faithfully translated to him. He quitted the subject abruptly, and never afterwards returned to it.'

It was a matter of great surprise to the public that Sir Henry Holland could 'afford' to travel so much; the general notion being, that however much a man makes, he can never make more than enough. But this was not Sir Henry's view. He made up his mind at an early period of his success that he would never sacrifice his health or happiness to money-getting, and fixed the limit of his annual gains at L.5000. He did not lose the confidence of his patients by this attention to the needs of his own nature. Of course they employed other physicians in his absence, but when he returned he found his old clients eager to employ him. 'I recollect,' he says, 'having found a patient waiting in my room when I came back from those mountain-heights—more than two hundred miles from the frontier of Persia—where ten thousand Greeks uttered their joyous cry on the sudden sight of the Euxine. The same thing once happened to me in returning from Egypt and Syria, when I found a carriage waiting my arrival at London Bridge, to take me to a consultation in Sussex Square; the communication in each case being made from points on my homeward journey. More than once, in returning from America, I have begun a round of visits from the Euston Station.'

His fees, of course, were large, yet not so large as those of some of his professional brethren. Dr Yates of Brighton was once presented by a grateful patient with a carriage and horses, and L.500 a year to keep them. Dr Chambers and Sir Benjamin Brodie realised L.12,000 a year by their profession, and Sir Everard Home used to return income-tax on L.21,000. Sir Astley Cooper's annual gains were still higher. This was made during his residence in the City, where patients live close together, and do not expect the small-talk which is looked for by fashionable folk. 'At the west end of the town it requires good management to see three patients in the hour. Sir Henry Hallford, it is said, could accomplish four. . . . The physicians who attended Queen Caroline had 500 guineas, and the surgeons 300 apiece; and Dr Willis was rewarded for his successful attendance on George III. by L.1500 a year for twenty years, and L.650.' An eminent Bristol doctor once took a fee under very remarkable circumstances. He found his patient dead with the right hand tightly clenched; within the fingers he discovered a guinea, and pocketed it, with the observation: 'Ah, that was for me, clearly!'

It has often been said that Shakspeare has, as it were by the intuition of genius, given descriptions of various diseases more correct than are to be found in the medical works of his time; but it will be news to many that Dickens has a great reputation of a similar sort. 'None except medical men,' says the *British Medical Journal*, 'can judge of the rare fidelity with which Dickens followed the great Mother through the devious paths of disease and death. In reading *Oliver Twist* and *Dombey and Son*, or *The Chimes*, or even *No Thoroughfare*, the physician often felt tempted to say: "What a gain it would have been to physic if one so keen to observe, and so facile to describe, had devoted his powers to the medical art!" It must not be forgotten that his description of hectic in *Oliver Twist* has found its way into more than one standard work in both medicine and surgery (Miller's *Principles of Surgery*, second edition, p. 46; also Dr Aitkin's *Præcise of Medicine*, third edition, vol. i. p. 111; also several American and French books); that he anticipated the clinical researches of M. Dax, Broca, and Hughlings Jackson, on the connection of right hemiplegia with asphasia (vide *Dombey and Son*, for the last illness of Mrs Skewton); and that his descriptions of epilepsy in Walter Wilding, and of moral and mental insanity in characters too numerous to mention, shew the hand of a master.'

Not only can genius thus faithfully depict diseases, but imagination can absolutely engender them. A man of science in Paris once prevailed on the Minister of Justice to experiment upon a murderer who had been condemned to death. The criminal was of high rank, and he was informed that, in order to save the feelings of his family, he would not be put to death upon the scaffold, but bled to death within the precincts of the prison; also that his decease would be free from pain. His eyes were bandaged, he was strapped to a table, and at a preconcerted signal, four of his veins were gently pricked with a pin. 'At each corner of the table was a small fountain of water, so contrived as to flow gently into basins placed to receive it. He, believing that it was his blood he heard flowing, gradually became weak; and the conversation of the doctors in an undertone confirmed him in this opinion. "What fine blood!" said one. "What a pity this man should be condemned to die! he would have lived a long time." "Hush!" said the other: then approaching the first, he asked him in a low voice, but so as to be heard by the criminal: "How many pounds of blood are there in the human body?" "Twenty-four: you see already about ten pounds extracted: that man is now in a hopeless state." The physicians then receded by degrees, and continued to lower their voices. The stillness which reigned in the apartment, broken only by the dripping fountains, the sound of which was gradually lessened, so affected the brain of the poor patient that, although a man of very strong constitution, he fainted, and died without having lost a drop of blood.'

Though certainly not the result of imagination, Contagion itself might almost seem to be so, so very slight are often the circumstances which suffice to induce it. In our own day, scarlet fever was carried in a piece of flannel round the throat of a servant-maid to a watering-place on the south coast, where it raged for months: but the con-

tagion of the plague was even more subtle, nor could years efface its virulence. Dr Parr of Exeter relates that the last plague which infected that town arose from a traveller remarking to his companion that, in a former journey, long ago, he had the plague in the room where they then sat. 'In that corner,' said he, 'was a cupboard in which the bandages were kept; it is now plastered over, but they are probably there still.' He broke open the cupboard, tore down the plaster, and found them. The disease was soon disseminated, and proved extremely fatal. At the Lizard, in Cornwall, you are shewn a part of the churchyard, separated from the rest, where the victims of the plague were interred (we believe) in 1665. A hundred years later, a ship was cast ashore at that place, and hundreds of persons perished. There being no room for such a number of bodies in the ordinary God's-acre, the plague portion was encroached upon, with the result that the malady broke forth again with the same virulence as before. The experience of the last Franco-German war has established the advantages of tobacco in certain stages of disease; but it seems that it was considered to have great protective powers two hundred years ago. Tom Rogers, who was a boy at Eton when the plague broke out there, relates how all the boys were obliged to smoke in school every morning, and that 'he was never so much whipped in his life as he was one morning for not smoking.' *Tempora mutantur*. Eton boys are now flogged for smoking.

If Mr Timbs gives us some alarm by his statements of the ease with which diseases are communicated, he relieves our minds upon other points. It seems clear that there can be no such thing, for instance, as slow poison. I utterly disbelieve, says a scientific medical writer, 'in the ability of the utmost perversity to produce slow poisoning once in a thousand attempts.' At the same time it is not to be denied that there are poisons which do their work quickly, and unless the body is *at once* investigated, leave no trace of their presence in it. Among others, our author instances the gipsy or 'drei' poison, for which medicine knows no antidote. Of this agent, however, doubtless for good reasons, he does not speak very particularly.

Of all the horrors which the wickedness of man has invented, there seems nothing so terrible as the prohibition from sleep, which obtains a hideous pre-eminence among the Chinese punishments. The condemned is placed in prison, under the surveillance of three jailers, who relieve one another every alternate hour; and at the commencement of the *eighth day* the sufferings of the victim have been known to be such as to cause him to entreat to be strangled. The general effect of this barbarous torture is, however, to produce madness.

There are subjects in these entertaining volumes to suit all tastes, and we gladly turn from the records of man's cruelty to his efforts to mitigate pain. In some cases, music has been found to be a good alleviator. In old times, it was a recognised medical agent. Thales was said to have cured by its means a pestilence in Sparta; Martinus Capella applied it to fever cases; and Xenocrates used it for maniacs; Asclepiades conquered deafness with a trumpet; and in modern days, it has been related of a deaf lady that she could only hear while a drum was beating, whence

a drummer was kept in the house for the purpose of enabling her to converse. It is well known that Philip of Spain was cured of his lunacy by music; and Sir Henry Hallford relates the case of a lunatic in Yorkshire whose senses were reclaimed by the violin. On the other hand, we fancy, many persons have been driven out of their minds by inharmonious noises, such as organ-grinding. Marville, who experimented on the power of music upon the lower animals, describes the cat as not being affected by it one way or the other. 'The horse stopped short from time to time, raising his head up now and then as he was feeding on the grass; the dog continued for above an hour seated on his hind-legs and looking at the player; the ass did not discover the least indication of his being touched, but went on cropping his thistles placidly; the hind lifted up her large wide ears, and seemed very attentive . . . and some little birds that were in an aviary almost tore their little throats with singing.' It is certain that dogs have an ear for music, though not all dogs, just as not all men, and will listen with pleasure to it, and even howl when a discord is struck. Hares, mice, spiders, and rattlesnakes are also more or less of connoisseurs; while at a concert given to two elephants in the Jardin des Plantes, the excitement evinced by that intelligent audience was so excessive that the performance had to be brought to an end abruptly.

The best feature of Mr Timbs' remarkable book is neither its amusing anecdotes, however, nor its interesting bits of information, but its 'saving common-sense.' There are no theories insisted upon, but the facts of medical science are stated, from which readers who have any intelligence of their own cannot fail to draw the right deductions. Nothing that is curious is omitted on the score of its incredibility, but it is not difficult to discern the false from the true. Thus, although it is stated that 'an ancient tradition relates that the inhabitants of the Isle of Syria never died of any distemper, but dropped into their graves at a certain old age,' it is not likely that our own 'peculiar people,' who never call in the doctor, will derive corroboration from our author for their peculiar views. He offers that statement for what it is worth, and also the figures of decrease in our death-rate from the advance of science, and (especially) the discovery of vaccination, for what they are worth, and leaves us to judge for ourselves. If a vulgar error, whether in religion or medicine, has obtained credence, he sets it forth; and also the antidote for it. For instance, 'that when a man's time has come, he must die,' is a very popular saying; but it is also well to consider how it works out; if particular, absolute, unconditional predestination be true, and a man's fate is irreversibly fixed before the foundation of the world, God has created medicines and the physician in vain. According to this doctrine, a rope need not be thrown to a sailor fallen overboard in the middle of the vast Atlantic, for he will swim a few thousand miles to shore, agreeable to the decree, if, as the saying has it, 'he was born to be hanged.' In this common-sense aspect, we cannot speak too highly of the proverbs, made by Dr Hunter and others, which are quoted in this work, with an example of one or two of which we will conclude our notice. They are equally applicable to doctors and patients.

Old young and old long.

A good surgeon must have an eagle's eye, a lion's heart, and a lady's hand.

Butter is gold in the morning, silver at noon, and lead at night.

One hour's sleep before midnight is worth two hours after.

Drink wine and have the gout; drink no wine and have it too.

You should never touch your eye but with your elbow.

The head and feet keep warm; the rest will take no harm.

When the wind is in the east, it is neither good for man nor beast.

The air of a window is as a stroke from a cross-bow.

The child is too clever to live long.

The best physicians are Dr Diet, and Dr Quiet, and Dr Merryman.

### PANEGYRICAL CURIOSITIES.

BACON held that princes ought, in courtesy, to be praised without regard to their deservings, since, by investing them with all possible virtues, their panegyrist shewed them what they should be. If the end justified the means, and if flatterers could be credited with such good intentions, the philosopher's dictum might perhaps be accepted; but we fear we should indeed be flattering the flatterers in believing them to be actuated by so unimpeachable a motive as that of teaching the objects of their praise to what perfection they ought to aspire. When Capgrave lauded the unfortunate hope of Henry II. as a prince brave as Hector, shrewd as Julius Cæsar, strong as Achilles, handsome as Paris, and good as Augustus, the outrageous comparison could not have served as an incentive, seeing the prince was drowned generations before his praiser was born. In this instance, however, flattery could bring no favour, and so far the chronicler rose superior to his tribe, who eschew praising dead men as unprofitable work.

Of all English sovereigns, Elizabeth, James, and Charles II.—three monarchs having nothing but their kingship in common—were the most berhymed and bepraised. Of these three the first named was the most fortunate, rejoicing in such courtiers as Leicester and Hatton, Harrington and Raleigh; while poets like Drayton, Spenser, and Shakspeare hymned her praise abroad. Spenser sang of his royal mistress's angel face; Drayton wrote:

Of silver was her forehead high;  
Her brows two bows of ebony.  
Her tresses trussed, were to behold  
Frizzled and fine in fringed gold.  
Two lips wrought out of ruby rock,  
Like leaves to shut and to unlock;  
As portal door to princes' chamber,  
A golden tongue in mouth of amber.  
Her eyes, God wot, what stuff they are!  
I durst be sworn each is a star,  
As clear and bright as wont to guide  
The pilot in his winter tide.

Sir John Davies rang the changes upon his queen's beauty, wisdom, wit, virtue, justice, and magnanimity in six-and-twenty admirable specimens of

acrostic verse, declaring in one of his hymns to Astrea—

Right glad am I that I now live,  
E'en in those days whereto you give  
Great happiness and glory.  
If after you I should be born,  
No doubt I should my birthday scorn,  
Admiring your sweet story!

Shakspeare's exquisite compliment and magnificent eulogium are too familiar to need more than naming. Fuller vowed if jewels had just cause to be proud it was with Elizabeth's wearing them. North dedicating his Plutarch to her, said: 'This book is no book for your majesty, who are meeter to be the chief story than a student therein, and can better understand it in Greek than any man can imitate it in English;' and there was a world of admiration in Pope Sixtus' remark: 'She is a big-head, that queen. Could I have espoused her, what a breed of great princes we might have had!'

Queen Bess understood her people well, and in setting the excellent precedent of making royal progresses through the kingdom, was prompted as much by a wise policy as by personal liking for public shows and ceremonious merry-making. These excursions afforded immense opportunities for the display of panegyric loyalty towards the great queen, who lost no occasion to declare she valued her people's love above all earthly things, a loyalty that tasked itself to invent complimentary epithets, welcoming its idol as its dainty darling, its peerless pearl, the honour of her kind, the most perfect paragon, the prince of God's elect, the flower of grace, the jewel of the world, the light of the realm, the special sprout of fame, and the finger of the Lord.

If James failed to stir Englishmen into extravagance, any shortcomings in the way of praise on the part of his new subjects were amply made up by his old ones, the first time he visited Scotland after donning the British crown. Dazzled by beholding the true phoenix, the bright star of the northern firmament, the deputy-clerk of Edinburgh assured his king that the very hills and groves, accustomed to be refreshed with the dew of his presence, had, in his absence, refused to put on their wonted apparel, and with pale looks bespoke their misery at his departure from the land; but found consolation in the knowledge that posterity would bless God for giving their forefathers a king as upright as David, as wise as Solomon, and as godly as Josiah. Master Robert Murray of Sterling asked what heart would not break for the absence of so well-beloved a prince; a prince whose many, many writings would in ancient days have been preserved in gold and cedar, as surely as they were destined to wrestle with and overcome Time; a prince whose liberality was known even to the antipodes. The spokesman of the citizens of Perth vowed, while the sunshine of their beauty was away, they sat like so many 'gyrasoles' languishing in the shades of darkness, but that, having him among them once more, they could like so many lizards delight themselves in the light of his gracious countenance. Paisley dubbed James the peculiar Phœbus of the western world; and Dumfries rejoiced at the coming of 'our Solomon,' under whose sceptre the white and red crosses were proportionately interlaced, the lion and leopard drew in an equal yoke, and the most honourable orders of the Thistle and the

Garret marched together. Sir John Beaumont lauded James, not only for his rare invention, ready elocution, and solid judgment, but also for his care for the English language, leading the lawless poets of the time to smoother cadences and exacter rhymes; and when he died, some one wrote:

Heaven his Star-chamber is, and we know all,  
He's gone from Theobald's to Jove's Whitehall.  
There's in the Zodiac one more sign placed,  
With thirteen buckles is heaven's girdle graced;  
The sign of Leo which he bare in's crest  
Doth add a Leo Major to the rest!

James's promising boy, Henry, Prince of Wales, had already been elevated to the skies:

Lo! where he shineth yonder,  
A fixed star in heaven;  
Whose motion here came under  
None of your planets seven.  
If that the moon should tender  
The sun her love, and marry,  
They both would not engender  
So great a star as Harry!

Ben Jonson's alliterative description of the First Charles as the best of monarchs, masters, and men, comprehensive as it is, sounds mean praise beside the extraordinary panegyrics of which the Merry Monarch was the subject. After extolling Cromwell for giving England peace and empire too, and restoring her to her old place among nations, Waller welcomed the king home again as the bringer back of the exiles Faith, Law, Justice, Piety, and Truth. Even after Charles had shewn what manner of man he was, the mob of patronage-seekers did not hesitate to call him God's pattern to mankind, and to hint that while he blessed the earth there was small need of Providence. Even the frail partners of his pleasures were invested with every virtue under the sun; and when an Otway could stoop thus ignobly, it is not surprising to find a versifier like Duke gravely writing:

Was ever prince like him to mortals given,  
So much the joy of earth and care of heaven?  
Beloved and loving, with such virtues graced,  
As might on common heads a crown have placed!  
How skilled in all the mysteries of state!  
How fitted to sustain an empire's weight!  
How quick to know—how ready to advise,  
How timely to prevent—how more than senates wise!

His mercy knew no bounds of time or place!  
His reign was one continued act of grace.  
Good Titus could, but Charles could never say,  
Of all his royal life, he lost a day.

Marvell himself might have owned the above lines, they are so exquisitely satirical, but he would not have finished by sending Charles to heaven, to be

Welcomed by all kind spirits and saints above,  
Who see themselves in him, and their own likeness love!

A collection of English panegyrics of royal personages would fill enough volumes to make a library, but it would be a library of very tough reading; although comicalities would crop up here and there, such as the effusion of Wesley's clerk:

King William has come home, come home;  
King William home is come;  
Therefore let us together sing  
The hymn that's called Te D'um!

Panegyric sometimes takes an amusingly awkward shape. General McClellan's feelings must have been of a mixed order at hearing himself saluted with: 'General, I have long desired to meet you; I always believed that you managed the army as well as you knew how!' though he shook hands with the perpetrator of the unconscious sarcasm. The writer of a biographical article in a magazine, desiring, as biographers usually do, to magnify his subject in the eyes of his readers, told them his hero had, ere he reached man's estate, 'achieved a certain status as orator and author.' Unfortunately, he felt impelled to explain that 'he had spoken at the Manchester Athenæum, and had written a five-act tragedy which had been'—Acted? O no—'privately printed.' The old Scotchwoman who termed De Quincey 'a body wi' an awful sight o' words,' shewed a shrewd appreciation of the Opium-eater, in declaring he would make a grand preacher, although 'a hantle o' the folk wadna ken what he was drivin' at.' This, however, was high praise compared with that meted to Wordsworth by the ancient Rydal dame, when some one asked her what kind of a man the poet was—'Oh, indeed, he is canny enough at times, and though he goes booing his pottery through the woods, he will now and then say "How do you do, Nanny?" as sensible as you and me.' Nanny might have paired off with the old family nurse at Selborne, who, speaking of the great naturalist who has made the place so dear to all lovers of nature, said: 'He was a still quiet body; there wasn't a bit o' harm in him, there wasn't indeed!' Still better and worse was the eulogium passed upon the 'Ladies of Llangollen,' as they were called: 'I must say, after all, they was very charitable and cantankerous; they did a deal of good, and never forgave an injury.'

Shakespeare affords us two good examples of what may be termed depreciatory panegyric. Benedick, spite of his protest, pressed by Claudio to praise his lady-love, Hero, satisfies his friend and his conscience with: 'Methinks she is too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise; only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.' Delicacy does not stand in the way of Falstaff speaking his mind about Poin, and thus he sums up the merits of the absent Ned: 'He plays at quoits well; and eats conger and fennel; and drinks off candles' ends for flapp'd dragon; and rides the wild mare with the boys; and jumps upon joint-stools; and swears with a good grace; and wears his boots very smooth, like unto the sign of the leg; and breeds no bate with telling of discreet stories; and such other gambol faculties he has, that shew a weak mind in an able body.' The biographer of that passionless creature of science, Henry Cavendish, writes of him: 'An intellectual head thinking, a pair of wonderful acute eyes observing, and a pair of very skilful hands experimenting or recording, are all that I can realise.' The epitaph on the gravestone of Basset, a Sussex sexton and parish clerk, describes him as one 'whose melody was warbled forth as if he had been thumped on the back with a stone.' Unequalled in severity stands Cato's praise of Cæsar as the first sober man who had ever made it his business to ruin his country. But the following lines, addressed to a disdainful beauty, are sufficiently bitter in all conscience:

Your breast is heaped like mountain snows,  
Your cheek is like a blushing rose,  
Your eyes are black as ripened sloes,  
Like diamonds do they glitter.  
I do not flatter like a fool—  
The diamond is a cutting tool,  
The rose is thorny, snow is cool,  
And sloes are very bitter.

This is neatly put, but not more neatly than La Bruyère's criticism of Montaigne's critics. In a couple of sentences he manages to set forth the excellences of the great essayist and the faults of his detractors: 'One of them thinks too little to taste an author who thinks a great deal; and the other thinks too subtly to be pleased with what is natural.'

The Venetians paid down six thousand gold crowns to Jacopo Sannazaro for half-a-dozen lines glorifying their city, whereof Evelyn gives this translation:

Neptune saw Venice on the Adric stand,  
Firm as a rock, and all the sea command.  
'Think'st thou, O Jove!' said he, 'Rome will excel'

Or that proud cliff, whence false Tarpeia fell?  
Grant Tiber best—view both—and you will say  
That men did those, gods these foundations lay!

Sannazaro was well paid; so, too, was the poet who received six hundred crowns from bald-pated Queen Stratonice for comparing the colour of her hair to the hue of the marigold. But our own Addison did still better than either, since he won his Commissionship of Appeals by a single line, likening Marlborough at Blenheim to an angel riding a whirlwind and directing the storm—surely the most profitable simile that ever came into an author's head. After all, Addison's high-flown compliment was not so great a one as that won by Louis XIV's fortunate commander, the Duc de Luxembourg, who never made a campaign without achieving a victory important enough to be blazoned on the walls of the great church of Paris, and so earned the honourable nickname from his countrymen of *Le Tapissier de Notre-Dame*. A happy bit of panegyric, too, was the complaint of the Frenchwoman upon the death of the Lutheran, Marshal Saxe, that it was vexatious to think they could not sing a *De Profundis* for the man who had so often compelled them to sing *Te Deum*. Nor need a brave man be ashamed if he receives no higher praise than that implied in William III's retort, when the friends of an officer represented the extraordinary danger of the service he had been appointed to perform: 'Well, then, send for honest Benbow!'

Grief too deep for words may yet say much. With all the wealth of language at his command, Goethe could not have said more in his dead wife's praise than when he wrote to Zitter: 'When I tell thee, thou rough and sorely tried son of earth, that my dear little wife has left me, thou wilt know what it means.' The wife of the victor of Blenheim, although she did not scruple to vex her lord, even to cutting off the tresses he loved so well, was quite alive to his merits. When a friend remarked that her worst enemies had never ventured to insinuate aught against her wifely fidelity, old Sarah replied there was no credit in being true in her case, seeing she had for her husband the handsomest, the most accomplished, the bravest

man in Europe. Another proud wife, who was always sounding her husband's praises, extorted from Swift, whose pen was seldom used for such a purpose, one of the most exquisite tributes ever commanded by a woman :

You always are making a god of your spouse,  
But that neither reason nor conscience allows ;  
Perhaps you may think it in gratitude due,  
And you adore him because he adores you.  
Your argument's weak—and so you will find—  
For you, by this rule, must adore all mankind !

Ben Jonson's well-known epitaph on Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother, the lines just quoted, and the expressive saying, 'To have loved her was a liberal education,' are probably the three finest examples of gallant panegyric in the language. Quin's after-thought was a happy one, when, after telling Lady Berkeley she looked as blooming as the Spring, he remembered the season was anything but a bright one, and added : 'I wish the Spring would look like your ladyship.' The sight of L. E. L.'s pretty face came like a shock to Hogg, who had abused her terribly whenever he had a chance, and made him exclaim repentantly : 'Oh, dear ! I have written and thocht mony a bitter thing about ye, but I'll do sae nae mair ; I didna think ye'd been sae bonny !'

Actors and singers come in for some odd forms of praise. On the death of Richard Burbage, Middleton, the dramatist, wrote :

Astronomers and star-gazers this year  
Write but of four eclipses—five appear :  
Death interposing Burbage, and their staying,  
Hath made a visible eclipse of playing.

Dr Delany, carried away by Mrs Cibber's singing in the *Messiah*, started up, and cried out : 'Woman, thy sins be forgiven thee !' a testimony to her power the fair singer would probably gladly have dispensed with. George II. was so impressed by Macklin's Shylock, that, upon Sir Robert Walpole expressing a wish it were possible to invent a means of frightening the House of Commons, the king asked him if he could not send the members to see that Irishman play Shakspeare's Jew ! Kitty Clive, in very vexation, swore Garrick could act a gridiron. Byron compared witnessing Kean's performances to reading Shakspeare by lightning. Johnson termed Foote the most irrepressible fellow in the world : 'When you have driven him into a corner, and think you are sure of him, he runs between your legs or jumps over your head, and makes his escape.'

The surest way of obtaining praise to one's taste is to praise one's self. Chateaubriand adopted what may be called the comparative method, with the complacent conceit characteristic of his countrymen, contriving to make himself out superior to both Milton and Byron. 'Milton,' wrote he, 'served Cromwell, I combated Napoleon ; he attacked kings, I defended them ; he hoped nothing from their pardon, I have not reckoned upon their gratitude. Now that in both our countries monarchy is declining to its end, Milton and I have no political questions to squabble about.' Then, after pointing out certain coincidences in his career and that of Byron, he observes that the only difference in their lives was that Byron's had not been mixed up with such important events as his own. When somebody congratulated Gilpin upon

the fact that, while all other callings were overcrowded, there were but a limited number of landscape gardeners, he quietly answered : 'No, there is only one !' A greater man than the self-believing gardener had an equal idea of his superiority over his compeers. Wordsworth, Hogg, and some other poets of more or less renown, met one evening at Christopher North's. A brilliant rainbow drew them out of doors, and the Ettrick Shepherd vowed the beautiful bow was displayed in honour of the assemblage of so many poets. Some little while later he heard Wordsworth mutter to himself : 'Poets, poets ! What does the fellow mean ? Where are they ?' Much more modest was Sir John Denham when begging Charles II. to spare the life of George Wither, on the plea that, if Wither were executed, he, Sir John, would be the worst poet in England. When Dr Parr, captivated by Erskine's conversational cleverness, called out to him : 'My lord, I mean to write your epitaph !' the scholar was, by implication, complimenting himself quite as much as Erskine, who capped the doctor's flattering announcement with : 'It is a temptation to commit suicide !' Parr was vain enough to swallow the lawyer's extravagant compliment ; but, as a rule, overpraise damages its subject. Wisely does Sam Slick say : 'If you want a son not to fall in love with any splendid gal, praise her up to the skies ; call her an angel ; say she is a whole horse team, and horse to spare, and all that. The moment the critter sees her he is a little grain disappointed, and says : "Well, she's handsome, that's a fact ; but not so very, very everlastin', after all !" Then he criticises her. Her foot is too thick in the instep, her elbow-bone is sharp, she rouges, is affected, and so on ; and the more you oppose him the more he abuses her, till he swears she ain't handsome at all. Say nothing to him, and he is spoony over head and ears in a minute. He sees all beauties and no defects, and is for walking into her affections at once. Nothin' damages a gal or a preacher like overpraise. A hoss is one of the onliest things in natur' that is helped by it.'

## CATCHING LARKS.

### IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

ON Sunday morning, Madge went down early, and finding the old butler in the dining-room, instantly entered on the subject nearest her thoughts.

'Joseph,' she said, 'I think a new fastening ought to be put on that window in the room next mine.'

Joseph did not answer immediately, and there was something odd in his manner, which sent a thrill of suspicion through Madge's mind.

'Fastening, miss ! Ain't there a fastening ? Well, I'll see about it, but I don't know as it matters much.'

'I certainly think you had better see about it,' said Madge with emphasis. 'It is not at all safe.'

'I hope you won't be alarmed, miss,' said Joseph more politely. 'My mistress has lived here for many years, with more valuables in the house than any one outside it has a notion of, and we've never been troubled with burglars yet.'

Madge would have added something more, but she heard Miss Thorne's Sunday silk rustling down-stairs, and so held her peace, feeling, however, more uncomfortable than before. If Joseph was not

to be trusted, what would become of them! and she knew very well that no suspicions of hers would be listened to by her cousin.

While they were sitting at their stiff breakfast in the gloomy dining-room at Monk's Dene, Robin was despatching his coffee and eggs in one of the odd old rooms of his uncle's house. It was a very funny and delightful old house, he thought, though he did not mean to live there. It stood near the church, at one corner of a large open square, with the market-cross in the middle, which formed the centre of the little town. There was a pair of tall iron gates, flanked by stone pillars and balls; then came a little paved court, and then the house itself, old red brick, with pilasters and ornaments. It had a large square hall, with a fire-place, a great many rooms panelled in white, of which the boards creaked dangerously, and a wide shallow-stepped staircase, with heavy carved oak banisters. It had been a stately house once, but was all falling to ruin now from long neglect; the rats, as Robin told his friend, had had it all their own way for fifty years. Yet Robin's uncle, and now Robin himself, owned nearly the whole of Abbot's Dene, besides a great deal of land in the country round. The old man, who had lived there with one old woman to keep house for him, was as great an oddity as Miss Thorney, and a still greater miser. But though he starved himself, and let his house fall to pieces, he was not a bad landlord, and the little town had thriven under his shaky rule.

Robin had been very busy all the week with his uncle's lawyer, inspecting the property, and planning all kinds of improvements. Mr Wilkins and his wife, who had four grown-up daughters, were very anxious that the young heir should make their house his headquarters for the present; but he chose to trust himself to old Nancy's care, and live in the old tumble-down mansion, so that Mrs Wilkins had to content herself with sending in everything nice she could think of, and getting him to dine with them as often as possible.

'Does old Miss Thorney of Monk's Dene ever come to church, Nancy?' said Robin to the old woman, as she cleared away his breakfast.

'Law bless you, yes! Every Sunday of her life.'

'Isn't it a long walk for her? Or perhaps she has a carriage?'

'No, sir. She gets a fly every Sunday from the Swan. She's got a niece or summat with her now: she'd one before as ran away.'

'A niece!' repeated Robin.

'No; that one warn't a niece, as I knows on. No relation, but she just came to be a companion, like. She didn't stand it above six weeks, and then she was gone. They thought she'd thrown herself into the water, and they dragged the stream; but she wasn't there, bless you. She'd run away.'

'What became of her?' said Robin, rather absently.

'Oh, she got married. The young man came to fetch her from Lon'on, they said. Miss Thorney hasn't had one since, till this here.'

Robin took his hat and went out into the sweet shady old garden with its high red walls. What an abominable shame! What were her relations doing, to send her to be miserable with Miss Thorney! They must be an odious set of people, utterly unworthy of her! Would she be made wretched, and driven to something desperate? 'By Jove! I'll know the reason why!' said Robin to

himself quite furiously, as he marched up and down the walk.

When the bells began to chime, he went out into the avenue of young limes which led up to the church door, and dawdled up and down there till nearly every one was gone in. The Wilkins family very naturally thought he was waiting for them, and were surprised when he turned back from the door, after walking with them up the avenue. When he saw a fly appear at the furthest corner of the square, he walked out as far as his own gate, and turning back, was just approaching the churchyard entrance, when the fly drew up. Old Joseph descended from the box, and opened the door. Madge got out first, and turned to help her cousin, not seeing Robin till Miss Thorney was safe on the ground, shaking out her silk skirts.

'What a frightful old woman!' thought Robin. 'And she looks quite pale and unhappy. Will she see me, I wonder?'

Madge looked round, and a sudden light sprang into her face. Robin returned her bow and smile, and then walked quickly on towards the church door, followed by Miss Thorney and her companion, and by two or three working-boys in their Sunday smartness. 'Look! that's him. That's old Hyde's nephew,' they whispered among themselves.

Mr Wilkins had a large family pew, of which he opened the door, with hospitable intent, as soon as he saw Robin come into church; but the young man did not see this movement, and turned into one of the free seats near the door.

'What a situation for the lord of the manor!' remarked Mrs Wilkins afterwards to her daughters.

He left the church as soon as service was over, going out among all the poor people, and walked off straight home, shutting his gate sharply behind him, but turning round to watch the fly driving up, and the two ladies getting into it. All through the service, Madge had kept her head persistently bent over her Prayer-book, being determined that her cousin should not accuse her of looking about in church. Robin had caught her eye once, and she had given him such a strange look—he could not make it out—half entreaty, half warning, it seemed to be: the fact was, that she could not help recognising him as the only friend she had in this neighbourhood, and yet did not dare to ask for his help in her present trouble.

In the afternoon, Robin was walking up and down the garden, unable to make up his mind what he should do next. He had quite decided that he was in love with his pretty fellow-traveller; of course; he had been thinking about her all the week; but how was he to make acquaintance with her, or manage that old dragon of an aunt, who was almost sure to have the doors shut upon him if he ventured to call? While he was racking his brains for an excuse, old Nancy came trotting down the path to meet him.

'Here's a lad wants to speak to ye.'

'Mr Wilkins's boy, with a note to ask me to dinner,' opined Robin; and then to himself: 'Hang them all! I shan't go.'

'It's no boy of Wilkins's,' said Nancy. 'His don't look near so sharp, though he is a lawyer.'

'Well, send him out to me here, Nancy.'

A smart-looking lad of about fifteen came hurrying down, looking flushed and eager.

'Mr Hyde, please, sir, do you know Miss Thorney?'

'No,' said Robin.

'My word, whatever shall I do!' exclaimed the boy, his face falling sadly. 'Why, I saw you with my own eyes bowing to her.'

'To Miss Margaret Thorne— the young lady.— What's the matter?'

'That'll do; I'll tell you, sir. My name's Jem Riddell. I can't go to the house, 'cause I don't know how to get speech of the young lady; and the servants would take precious care I didn't see the old un. So I thought I'd best come to you, for you'd know what to do; and the house'll be robbed to-night if we don't take care.'

'What! Miss Thorne's house? How do you know?' said Robin sharply.

'I was down gathering honeysuckles in Tinker's Croft, and I heard 'em talking in the little arbour in Phil Wright's garden, just t' other side of the hedge. There was old Joseph, and Phil, and another man I didn't know, but them I'd swear to anywhere. They fixed it for twelve o'clock precisely, 'cause the moon'll be down; they're going in by the tree against the window where the plate-chest is; and they're going to fasten the young lady's door on the outside; and old Joseph said he'd give his missus summum to sleep on, so as they might take what was in her room; and then they're going to do the rest o' the house: there's thousands o' pounds' worth to be had in that house, they said. I couldn't think of nothing better than to come to you.'

'You were quite right,' said Robin. 'Keep it quiet, and we'll catch them in the act. Come along with me to the police-station; the back-way, so that we mayn't be seen.'

An hour later, they were back again in Mr Hyde's dining-room.

'Have a glass of wine, Jem,' said Robin. 'Now, remember, you and the policemen are to meet me at Miss Thorne's gate at nine o'clock punctually.'

'I'll be there, sir,' said Jem Riddell.

'Very well. Here's something for your sharpness.'

'Never was a sovereign so easily earned,' thought Jem, as he left the house.

#### CHAPTER V.

Madge had spent most of Sunday afternoon in reading theology to her cousin; and when she went out into the garden as usual, after dinner, it was with a weary and puzzled brain, and a sense of deep depression. All the while she turned over the yellow pages, reading mechanically on and on, she was planning half unconsciously to herself what she should do if she heard any noise in that room in the night. That unfastened window was like a nightmare: it shadowed all her thoughts, and lay like a weight upon her brain. She wandered dreamily across the lawn, and down to the banks of the stream, pushing her way in among the trees and shrubs, and pausing to look into the dark water, which flowed so slowly and steadily through the deep shade. Suddenly, as she stood there, she heard a little rustle among the bushes on the further bank. She started violently, but stood still, thinking it might be only an animal. But the rustle became louder, and Robin appeared, pushing his way to the water's edge.

'Miss Thorne! is that you?' he said in a low voice.

Madge wondered how he knew her name, and

what brought him there; resolving at the same moment to be very good, and send him away at once.

'Yes,' she answered. 'Oh, you mustn't come here, please. My cousin would not like it.'

'But I must,' said Robin. 'I want particularly to speak to you. If you'll wait for me, I'll cross in the boat which is just above here. It concerns your aunt as much as yourself.'

'Very well; I'll wait, only make haste,' said Madge, terribly afraid she was doing wrong, but with a sort of notion that she ought not to drive away any chance of help and protection.

The boat was hidden under the overhanging brushwood, a few yards farther up. Robin pushed it out, and punted himself across so quickly and silently, that Madge found him standing in it close to her before she had made up her mind what to say or do.

'It is taking a liberty, I know,' said Robin, looking up at her with his frank pleasant face, and shaking back his hair. 'But, without wishing to frighten you, I must tell you at once that your aunt's property is in danger.'

'I know! I thought so; that window,' exclaimed Madge, clasping her hands in anxiety. 'What is to be done? Can you help me?'

'Will you tell me,' said Robin gravely, 'why you thought so, and what you mean by "that window?"'

'The window in the room next mine, where the plate-chest is. I went in last night and found the fastening gone, and any one could get in so easily from the tree close to it. I went directly to tell my cousin, but she was angry, and laughed at me for being afraid.'

'Wise!' muttered Robin. 'Oh, I thought the old lady was your aunt. And did you say anything to the servants?'

'I spoke to the butler this morning, but he told me not to be alarmed; he would see to it. I ought not to say so, perhaps, but I did not quite like his manner, and have felt more afraid ever since.'

Madge hardly realised yet that her confidence in Robin had suddenly removed the load of depression and anxiety which had been weighing upon her all day.

'He said he would see to it, did he? And that was all?'

'Yes; that was all.'

'Well, don't be alarmed, because the danger is past, and you are perfectly safe now. But, listen to what I heard this afternoon from a lad called Riddell, who has his wits about him.'

Madge listened intently to Robin's story. 'How wicked! how dreadful!' she exclaimed. 'Poor Cousin Sarah! That old man has been with her for years, and she has always been kind to him, I'm sure. Can he have meant to give her poison?'

'Not poison, I hope; not so bad as that. Something to make her sleep. Now, I want to settle our plans for to-night. My idea is that your cousin should not know anything of the business till it is finished; she might hinder us from catching that old rascal Joseph, who seems to me the worst of the lot. The policemen are to meet me at the gate at nine o'clock. Jem tells me that your hall-door stands open till quite late in this weather. Can you manage to slip out of the drawing-room soon after nine, take me and one of the policemen upstairs, and hide us either in that room or near it, while the other two go and hide in the garden near

the tree? Then we shall let the rascals get right up into the room, so that they will be caught in a regular trap. I hope this won't be wanted, but I have it, in case'—he took a revolver out of his pocket. 'You had better lock yourself into your room when the time comes, so as to be out of the row. You have courage enough for all this, I'm sure.'

Robin spoke with animation; he was quite ready to enjoy the adventure. Madge did not answer instantly, for she was thinking; but in a minute she looked steadily at him and spoke.

'I hope you won't think me a coward; it is not because I'm afraid that I don't like your plan. But I see several reasons against it. How is my cousin to be prevented from taking that dreadful sleeping-draught, which may even be poison, if she knows nothing of the danger? She always has warm wine-and-water before she goes to bed.'

'Can't you manage to break the glass and spill it, and then make her some more yourself?'

'I don't think I can,' said Madge smiling. 'And I believe she will be very angry if all this goes on in her house without her knowing it. She may be odd-tempered, but I'm sure she is no coward, and I think she would do anything that was right, and not even hinder you from catching old Joseph. I don't think it would be right of me to admit any one into the house without her knowledge. In fact, I can't consent to do it.'

'You don't trust me, I believe,' said Robin, after a pause of astonishment. 'What are we to do, then?'

'Yes, I do trust you,' answered Madge. 'I wish you would come with me now to Miss Thorney, and lay the whole thing clearly before her. It is eight o'clock. I must go in to make tea for her. Come with me, and stay outside the window till Joseph is gone; then I'll call you in.'

'I will,' said Robin, springing out of the boat.

They left the stream, and walked across the lawn together, taking care to keep in the shade of the trees.

'I beg your pardon,' said Madge softly, 'but I think I ought to know your name.'

'Of course you ought. I'm Robert Hyde. I live in that old house near the church; it used to belong to my uncle.'

'Thank you,' said Madge; and going quickly on, she turned in at the drawing-room window, while Robin sat down under a piece of blank wall, and thought what a melancholy place it was, and how pretty and charming she looked in that soft muslin dress—an old crumpled thing with many darns; but he only saw the general effect.

Old Joseph's feelings would not have been envious, had he known what made the young lady's hand tremble as she took the tea out of the silver canister, which was to disappear with the other valuables before to-morrow morning; or how much difficulty she had in saying 'Thank you' to him in her natural voice, when there was water enough in the teapot. He went away, however, unsuspecting; and Miss Thorney woke up and stretched herself, yawning violently two or three times.

'What's the matter with you, my dear?' she said, in a kinder voice than usual. 'You're as white as your gown.'

'Nothing, thank you,' said Madge. 'Cousin Sarah, there is a gentleman outside who wants to speak to you on most particular business.'

And before Miss Thorney could recover from the shock sufficiently to find words, Madge was at the window: 'Mr Hyde!' and Robin was in the room.

'What's your name, sir, and what do you want?' said Miss Thorney, looking from one to the other in enraged suspicion.

'Let me introduce myself as Robert Hyde. You probably knew my uncle.'

'What! are you the young man that has succeeded to everything?'—Robin bowed.—'Then what can you want here?'

'I came to tell you, Miss Thorney, that a gang of burglars intend to break into your house to-night. Don't be alarmed, please. It's all right. I've told the police.'

Miss Thorney, who had been standing upright, dropped into her chair with a gasp, which alarmed Robin.

'Can I get you anything?' said Madge anxiously.

'Don't be a fool, child.—Well, go on. What are the police going to do?'

'They wish if possible to catch the fellows in the act. The thieves mean to climb a tree, and get in at a window of which the fastening has been removed.'

'You were not so wrong, after all, child,' said Miss Thorney, nodding at Madge.

'If you have no objection,' Robin went on, 'one of the policemen shall be hidden in that room, while the others watch below. But the most painful part of the business is yet to come: I am sorry to say that your old butler is an accomplice.'

Miss Thorney's pale old cheek grew a little paler.

'And please, Cousin Sarah,' exclaimed Madge, 'don't drink the wine-and-water he brings you to-night. He means to put something in it to make you sleep more heavily than usual.'

'Old villain!' said Miss Thorney. 'After all I've done for him! Well, let justice take its course. Mr Hyde, I am obliged to you. I don't know why you should take any trouble to preserve my property. However, settle the business your own way. But how did you find out all this?'

Robin told his story, and answered the old lady's sharp questions.

'Very well,' she said, when she had heard all. 'Now you had better go, and we will have our tea. Bring the policeman to this window when he comes, and Margaret will shew you the way upstairs.'

'That old lady's not such a bad one, after all,' thought Robin, as he stepped out into the twilight.

When Joseph came for the tea-tray, his mistress was sitting with her face turned away from the light, and Margaret was reading at the table.

'Shall I shut the windows, ma'am?' said Joseph.

'No; leave them.'

'What time shall I bring the wine-and-water, if you please, ma'am?'—in a voice even more woolly than usual.

'At half-past ten. Bring the decanter and some warm water, and an extra tumbler. Miss Margaret may like some, and will mix it for herself.'

'Very well, ma'am,' said Joseph, and away he went with his tea-tray.

'I thought I should have choked,' said Miss Thorney. 'Good gracious! it's a wicked world. How long have you known that young man, Margaret?'

'We travelled together last Monday nearly all

the way from home. That is all I know of him,' said Madge.

Miss Thorney grunted, and was silent. Madge sat still with a book before her, turning over a leaf now and then, but not understanding a word; it was hard work, for she felt all on end with excitement, and jumped up with a violent start when, at a few minutes past nine, there was a step outside, and Robin looked in at the window. Miss Thorney was sitting upright in her chair, wide awake, with stern decision in her face.

'Come in,' she said. 'Is the policeman there?'

'Here he is,' said Robin, as they stepped into the room. 'May we leave our boots under this sofa?'

'As you please,' answered the old lady.—'Now, Margaret, lead the way up-stairs.'

'What will happen if we meet any of the servants?' said Madge.

'We shall keep them quiet,' said Robin, glancing at the policeman, a tall, strong, silent fellow, who looked as if he was equal to any number of burglars.

Madge opened the drawing-room door very softly, and stole along the dim hall, up the stairs, and along the passages, followed by her two companions, who trod as noiselessly as herself.

'That is my cousin's room,' she whispered to Robin, as they passed the foot of Miss Thorney's steps; then a little further on: 'This is mine; and this is the room you are to hide in.'

The moon, which would be down before twelve, was shining in through the tree at the dangerous window, and the floor was all checkered with light and shadow.

'Which is the plate-chest?' said Robin. 'This? Then we can't do better than put ourselves just behind it in this old wardrobe.'

'Oh, take care!' exclaimed Madge, as he turned the rusty key.

'Never fear. Joseph is eating his supper in peace.—Rather stuffy, but I suppose this is the best place'—to the policeman.

'Yes, sir. The young lady had better take the key.'

'Ah! it wouldn't suit us to be locked in. That's it. We'll leave the door ajar till the time draws near. Good-night.'

The policeman had already dived into the wardrobe, among Miss Thorney's old gowns and those of her mother—a musty atmosphere. Madge put her hand for the first time into Robin's, and it flashed across her that there might be danger in what he was doing; the thieves might have revolvers too.

'Do take care of yourself,' she said in a trembling whisper. 'Must you really stay here?'

'Why, what a bad opinion Miss Thorney would have of me if I turned back at the last moment.'

'I don't know that her opinion matters.'

'It matters very much to me just now, I assure you. However, don't frighten yourself; it's all right. There are two policemen and Jem Riddell in the garden; and if five men can't manage three, they must be very poor fellows. Good-night.'

He disappeared into the depths of the wardrobe, and Madge stole away down-stairs again as quickly as she could. What could he mean by caring for her cousin's opinion?

'You have some sacred music, child?' said Miss Thorney, as soon as she was back in the drawing-room. 'Go and play a little, to quiet our minds.'

Madge was very far from being in a musical frame, but she obeyed, and Miss Thorney took no notice of the numerous wrong notes. It was after ten when she called to her to stop.

'Joseph will be here directly,' she said. 'Afterwards, I shall go up-stairs as usual, and Lawrence will undress me; she may be an accomplice too, perhaps. You will go to your room, but don't undress. After Lawrence is gone, come to my room, and stay there till it's all over. Do you understand?'

'Yes,' said Madge.

'Very well. There's Joseph with the tray; he's come a little before the time, that his nice draught may have time to work.'

Madge shuddered, and her cousin's features relaxed into a grim smile. Old Joseph came stumping in, and set down the tray, with his mistress's tumbler ready mixed as usual.

'Thank you, Joseph,' said Miss Thorney. 'Leave the tray, and come again in ten minutes to shut the windows and take it away.'

The old man went away silently.

'Now, then,' said Miss Thorney, when she had heard the door into the back hall swing to behind him; 'throw away the contents of that precious tumbler on the grass. No! I'll find out what the old wretch meant to do to me. Get that glass vase; empty it into that; lock it up in the chiffonier, and give me the key. Very nicely done. Now mix me some wine-and-water in that other tumbler, and fill the wine-glass for yourself.'

'I would rather not, thank you,' began Madge.

'Do as I tell you,' answered Miss Thorney; and she was accordingly obeyed.

Joseph came in again, shut the windows, and took up the tray with the empty glasses, looking as stolid as an old elephant.

'Send Lawrence with my candle at once,' said Miss Thorney.—'I wonder what makes me feel so sleepy, Margaret!'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Joseph.

Madge looked at the old lady in silent astonishment at her sharpness and coolness, and thought she was like a gnome or a troll, or some of those cunning Northland spirits, there was something so uncanny in the twinkle of her little gray eyes. Sleepy! she had never been wider awake in her life.

#### CHINESE WRITING AND PRINTING.

It is a matter of common notoriety that, in numerous instances, the customs of the Chinese are diametrically opposed to our own, and this remark applies especially to their writing and reading. We write our letters in *horizontal* lines from left to right, and print our books in the same manner; the Chinese, on the contrary, write in *perpendicular* lines from right to left, so that what is the last page of a book or letter with us, is the first with them. Amongst ourselves, most scholarly writers are somewhat particular in the punctuation of their sentences; but a Chinaman, as far as we are aware, never dreams of putting even a 'full stop' in a letter or any other written document, and it is but seldom that one meets with a book that is regularly punctuated. We write our names, more or less legibly, at the end of our notes and letters; the Chinese, as Sir J. Davis observes, 'sign with a cipher which every man adopts for himself, being

a few characters combined in a complicated manner into one. Another mode of attestation is by affixing the stamp of a seal, not in wax, but in red ink.

Sir John Davis, in his work on the Chinese, from which we have just quoted, further remarks: 'The Chinese attach much consideration to the graphic beauty of their written character, and make use of inscriptions for ornamental purposes, as may be often seen on the specimens of porcelain brought to this country. The advantage of simplicity (and a very great advantage it is) constitutes the merit of our alphabetic writing, but that of variety and picturesque effect may fairly be claimed by the Chinese. The importance of calligraphy as an accomplishment is naturally esteemed more highly among them than it is in Europe; and large ornamental inscriptions or labels are frequently exchanged as remembrances among friends, or used as pictures are among us, for purposes of taste and decoration.' The Chinese spend much time and labour over the acquisition of a neat and elegant handwriting, and when they have attained this object of their ambition, they frequently turn it to what appears to the foreign mind a most curious use—namely, the writing of the huge scrolls referred to above, and the inscription of moral sentences on fans, &c.

Answering in some measure to our Roman and Italic type, black-letter, &c. the Chinese have six different styles of writing their characters—namely, 1, the Chuan or Seal character; 2, the style of official attendants; 3, the pattern style; 4, running hand; 5, abbreviated running hand; and 6, the style of the Sung dynasty.

1. Foreigners commonly call this the Seal character from its being generally only used for seals or stamps, ornamental inscriptions, &c. Its Chinese name is said to be derived from the person who invented it. It is the oldest form of writing next to the original pictorial hieroglyphics, and is distinguished into two kinds, the greater and inferior. The former is used for seals and stamps, and is also to be seen on some kinds of goods, especially on porcelain; the characters all look extremely alike, and seem to be an inextricable labyrinth of rectangular lines. The latter kind is also sometimes used for seals, in prefaces of books, and ornamental inscriptions.

2. The style of official attendants was first employed about the commencement of the Christian era, and was invented for the use of the clerks and writers in public offices. Nowadays, it is most often used in prefaces and for inscriptions; it requires no special study to read it, as it is very clear and distinct, and differs but slightly from the following.

3. The pattern style has been gradually formed by the improvements of good writing. No Chinese can have any claim to literary merit unless he can write neatly and correctly in this style. It is the usual form of Chinese writing, and books are sometimes printed in it.

4. The 'running hand' is almost a literal translation of the Chinese expression for this kind of writing. The characters are written in an easy and free manner, without the writer's pen being necessarily raised from the paper; in this style, however, only those abbreviations which are to be found in the dictionaries are allowed. A neat business writer commonly uses this 'running hand,' and it is also very often employed for prefaces of

books and inscriptions, in scrolls and tablets, for shop-signs, &c. Schoolboys are taught to write both this and the pattern style at the same time, by means of copy-books with characters arranged in parallel columns.

5. The translation of 'tsao-tsze,' the Chinese term for what is above called the abbreviated running hand, is 'plant or grass character,' and foreigners generally call it by the latter name. It is an exceedingly free style of writing, and full of the most puzzling abbreviations, which often render it difficult even for natives to decipher; and Europeans rarely, if ever, attain to such a knowledge of this kind of handwriting as to be able to read anything written in it without the aid of an experienced Chinese. We have heard it facetiously likened to the effect which would be produced by dipping a spider's legs in ink, and letting him crawl over a sheet of paper! When writing in this style, a Chinaman often lets his pen run from character to character without taking it off the paper, and makes his own abbreviations, to avoid the labour of the numerous strokes required in some characters, if written in the 'pattern style.' To understand this kind of writing fully, necessitates special study, and its chief use is in first drafts of letters, despatches, &c. It is also employed, to a certain extent, by men of business, and is sometimes found in inscriptions and in prefaces of books, especially those of aged writers.

The sixth form of writing came into use about the tenth century, during the Sung dynasty, as a more elegant form of printing than the other classes above enumerated. It is believed that, since the time of its invention, no material alteration has taken place in the manner of forming the characters, which differs from the style of official attendants and the pattern style mainly in the greater stiffness of the strokes forming the characters, and in a certain squareness of appearance. This still continues to be the style most used for printing books, at anyrate those which have any pretensions to being well and carefully got up. Only persons, however, employed in writing for printing-offices are required to learn it, as it is not used for any other purpose.

Of these six forms of writing, the pattern style and the running hand are the only two which are studied by most Chinese, but well-educated men generally have a knowledge of some of the Seal characters.

As we have observed before, the Chinese take extraordinary pains to learn to write neatly, and to form the characters in a duly proportioned manner. Boys are taught by placing thin tracing-paper over their copies, and they practise an easy use of the pen, so necessary for elegant writing, by constantly writing characters on a painted board; by dint of great labour, many eventually learn to write a beautiful hand, which even Europeans, entirely unacquainted with the language, will admire, if only for the perfect symmetry and minuteness of detail with which the complicated strokes composing the characters are put together. The Chinese student is very particular about his pen and ink, and he is even fanciful on the subject of the ink-slab, on which the latter is carefully rubbed with a little water. The pens (or, as they are sometimes called, 'pencils') rather resemble our camel-hair brushes, and are made, the better kind from the hair of the sable and fox, and the commoner sorts

from that of the deer, wolf, cat, &c.; the stick or handle is of bamboo; and each pen has a little case or sheath of bamboo or metal to protect the hair from injury, for the tip of the pen is so fine that care has to be taken to keep it in good order for writing with. The ink is made from lampblack, &c. mixed with glue and similar substances, and is always scented with musk. The cakes are often adorned with curious devices and short sentences, stamped in gilt and coloured characters. The ink-slab is made of different kinds of stone, carefully ground smooth, and has a small cavity or depression at one end to hold water; but some students have a species of small cup placed beside them with a little water in it. This cup is sometimes handsomely carved out of a piece of jade-stone, and fitted on to a wooden stand; it is furnished with a small ladle, not unlike a salt-spoon. Nearly all paper in China is made from the woody fibre of bamboo, and is mostly of a yellowish colour; it has no strength, and is very easily torn, and the effect of water upon it is much the same as upon our blotting-paper. The articles described above are called by the Chinese 'Wên-fang sze pao'; that is, the four precious implements of the library.

Some Chinese writers hold that movable characters, made of burnt clay, and placed in a frame, were invented towards the close of the Sung dynasty, about A.D. 1280. This method of printing, however, does not seem to have been found successful, for native printers now do their work, as it has been done for centuries past, on the stereotype principle. Movable metal characters have been in use for some years in the few foreign printing-offices at Hong-kong and Shanghai, but the innovation does not make way with the natives, and in point of fact it does not seem, in our opinion, very well suited to their language, which is so different in its nature from those of other nations. With an alphabetical language, movable type lightens the printer's labours immensely; but such is not the case with Chinese; for to print an ordinary book, probably at least upwards of two or three thousand distinct characters would be required, and in some instances this amount would have to be multiplied by ten; while to print a complete dictionary, we believe we are correct in stating that between forty and fifty thousand distinct and separate characters would be wanted.

The process of printing a book in China is somewhat as follows: Two pages are written by a person, trained to the business, on a sheet of thin paper, divided into columns by black lines, and in the space between the two pages are written the title of the work, and the number of the chapter and page; when the sheet has been printed, it is folded down through this space, so as to bring the title, &c. partly on each page. The sheet, when ready for printing, is pasted face downwards on a smooth block of wood, made usually from the pear or plum tree. As soon as it is dry, the paper is rubbed off with great care, leaving behind an inverted impression of the characters. Another workman now cuts away all the blank spaces by means of a sharp graver, and the block with the characters in high-relief passes to the printer, who performs his work by hand. The two points that he has to be most careful about are—to ink the characters equally with his brush, and to avoid tearing the paper when taking the impression. Proclamations, visiting-cards, &c. are all printed in

the same manner. An economical way of printing small handbills and advertisements for walls is to cut the characters in *was* instead of wood; but they soon get blurred, and the printing from them is often almost illegible. From a good wooden block some fifteen thousand sheets can be printed; and when the characters have been sharpened up a little, it is possible to obtain eight or ten thousand more impressions.

#### FLOWERS OF THE HEART.

THERE are some flowers that bloom,  
Tended by angels even from their birth,  
Filling the world with beauty not of earth,  
And heaven-born perfume.

Along Life's stony path,  
To many a toiling pilgrim, cheer they bring,  
And oftentimes in living glory spring  
Beside the poor man's hearth.

Fairest of all the band  
(E'en as the snowdrop lifts its fearless head,  
In storm and wind, unmoved, unblemished),  
Truth's precious blossoms stand.

The daisy's star is bright,  
O'er vale and meadow sprinkled wide and free,  
So to the shadowed earth doth Charity  
Bring soft celestial light.

O cherish carefully  
The tender bud of Patience; 'tis a flower  
Beloved of God! in sorrow's darkest hour  
'Twill rise to comfort thee.

So, when all else hath gone  
Of joy and hope, through winter's icy gloom,  
The Alpine violet puts forth its bloom  
Where sunbeam never shone.

Strong Self-denial's stem  
Of thorns, clasp well, for, if not upon earth,  
In paradise 'twill burst in roses forth,  
Each present thorn a gem.

These are the flowers that bloom,  
Tended by angels even from their birth,  
Filling pure hearts with beauty not of earth,  
And heaven-born perfume.

NOTE.—The story, *A Young Hero*, in *Chambers's Journal* of 15th February, owes its origin in part to a ballad of the same name in a small volume entitled *Half an Hour with a good Author* (published by Hotten, Piccadilly), which also contains other poems well worth perusal.

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